

economic and social order can be all things to all people. Like foreign aid or welfare, educational innovation argues that if the necessary changes are impractical because they would upset too many traditions, then at least school districts can be provided with revenue to reassure them that they are grappling with important issues.¹²²

We don't know how far the metaphor of ESP as revenue sharing can or should be taken. Given the literature on educational innovation, we suspect it is a useful analogy and that an analysis of many innovations would reveal a similar pattern. Nor do we want to argue that a legitimate function of education may be stability rather than change, for that argument is beyond the scope of this report. It seems clear, however, that given the current relationship between grantors and grantees, and given the institutional parameters within which schooling operates, and given the institutional parameters within which schooling operates, revenue sharing may be all that we can expect from many educational innovations. If so, we should reduce the rhetoric about change and innovation and acknowledge instead the more obvious role of federal government attempts at funding change as simply another means of allowing the system to operate in variations of the way it has operated all along. By acknowledging this role we might, at least, reduce the tendency for the local school district to be the major focus in searches for reasons things don't work--and that would be an accomplishment.

While we have spoken to the "what" and the "why" of the ESP, we have yet to detail what the Jefferson case can tell us about change efforts--their conceptualization and implementation. In the next chapter, we cover some implications of the Jefferson ESP for future attempts at planned change.

¹²²The notion of social policy as symbolically reassuring is discussed at length in M. Edelmann, The Symbolic Uses of Politics, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, 1964. See also Martha Derthick, New Towns in Town, The Urban Institute, Washington, 1972.

CHAPTER IX
IMPLICATIONS

IX. IMPLICATIONS

The Experimental Schools Program represented a new approach by a federal agency in funding programs of planned change in a local school district. Previously the federal government's approach to funding reform programs had been to earmark monies for change in one or two elements within the larger system (e.g., a reading program, a math curriculum, or new staffing arrangement). The impetus or specific change most often emanated from the funding agency, and the contract usually extended over a short period. The ESP differed from previous approaches in several respects. First, the program spanned a five year period--a sizeable slice of time in the annals of government funding. Second, an average of one million dollars per year for five years represented a substantial increase in financial assistance by a government agency for a program of educational reform. Third, systemic change was to occur; that is, most of the elements within the school system were to undergo change simultaneously. Fourth, decisions about the specific changes that were to occur in the several elements were to originate with the local district. Fifth, the federal government, through its funding agency, was to assume a stance of minimal intervention in the design of the program and also in its implementation.¹

Although change did occur in the Jefferson School District during project years, as has been explicated in this report, it should be quite clear that no systematic plan emerged to carry out the grandiose program of reform as conceived by the writers of the proposal and approved by the funding agency. There are a myriad of more or less legitimate reasons or explanations why massive, systemic reform did not occur, and this chapter deals with those which appear to be most salient. Some factors for not adopting and/or implementing the ESP on a districtwide basis can be explained by a failure of either the local district or the funding agency to take them into consideration. Other explanations fall into the categories of inability to exercise control or disinclination to exercise control. These potential categories are mentioned not because data exist that permit them to be used as analytical constructs operationalized in this chapter, but instead to elevate them to a level of consciousness for us and interested readers.

Conceptualizing systemic, comprehensive change, communicating the sense of it to others, deciding when a potential client had a purchase on it sufficient to merit funding, deciding that a reasonable climate for change existed at the client level, deciding that the capacity existed at the local level in sufficient abundance to implement the agreed upon plan, and monitoring the implementation of such plan are tasks of

¹It was not different from previous approaches in the sense that the local plan was to be approved by the funding agency and that some monitoring was to occur during the life of the program.

considerable magnitude. These tasks and more faced the planners of Experimental Schools at the national level. To say they were merely difficult is to understate the case, but to designate them as impossible may be overstating the case. However, when constraints at the federal level are considered, both externally and self-imposed constraints, substantial success appears unlikely. When combined with constraints that existed in the Jefferson School District, successful implementation of the planned project appears highly improbable. Conditions at the federal level that impeded reform in establishing a new approach to promoting local change are considered next, followed by a discussion of problems and issues that militated against systemic, comprehensive change in the Jefferson School District. Please note that it is often the interaction of the constraints which prevents or hinders successful solutions.

A. Constraints at the Federal Level

Several constraints were operating at the federal level which militated against the likelihood that a comprehensive, systemic program of planned reform could be mounted and sustained. Some of the factors that had long hindered local change also seemed to inhibit federal officials in working out a new plan for funding a change program. Federal officials needed to conceptualize what was meant by comprehensive, systemic change and to communicate this to potential clients and significant others. They needed to conceptualize the social conditions conducive to change and to determine when these conditions existed at the local level. They needed to establish clear and consistent policies as to how the federal and local agencies were to relate, which also included the establishment of mechanisms and procedures for resolving conflict with local agencies. Operationally, federal planners and supervisors faced such constraining factors as minimal time to plan and mount the program, insufficient resources to build and maintain a staff capable of supervising a program of such magnitude as well as severely limited resources for staff travel to the various ESP sites, almost constant turnover in the staff, and a lack of continuity in priorities by major policy makers.

Although it was the task of local educational agencies to plan the specific changes they were to adopt and implement, federal officials were charged with laying out the parameters of comprehensive change, making related decisions, and allocating funds to the Local Education Agency (LEA) as well as monitoring local expenditures. There were no successful models for change (that is, cooperative ventures between a funding agency and a local school district) to serve as a point of departure. Previous ventures in school reform did not meet with much success and the picture has not changed appreciably in more recent years. The existence of a successful model would probably have precluded a need for the federal government to underwrite a new model. Models for comprehensive, systemic reform were nonexistent. Insofar as we are aware, there had been only one previous attempt at promoting comprehensive change in schools by an outside agency. The Ford Foundation had funded some comprehensive change programs in the early mid-sixties. Some

problems had been identified but were of minimal or no assistance to the planners of ESP since the results had not been written up and published.

The notion of providing funds to school districts to bring about extensive reform as alluded to in the proposal rhetoric and then watching carefully to see what happens seems to be rather fundamentally at odds with what is known about how and why change occurs. Providing funds for a proposed plan of reform and then assuming a stance of minimal intervention might very well be effective under a set of social conditions where the incentive for change is strong and widely shared by the significant actors in the system targeted for change. Even then an inclination to change is insufficient if the capability to carry out the program of reform is not present. It is risky to assume that the rhetoric of change contained in a proposal is reliable evidence of things present or things future. The alternative to making the assumption that a climate conducive to change exists is to study existing social conditions carefully and systematically. This calls for resources in time and money that usually do not accompany external funding of planned change and which certainly was not the case with Experimental Schools. We strongly recommend that this be made an integral part of any future intervention model. The evaluation effort might also be enhanced considerably.

One of the important lessons to be learned from J ESP is that adequate funds are insufficient to induce planned reform if other conditions are not conducive to change. It can be said that revenue to underwrite programs of change is a necessary but not sufficient condition. It promotes the means by which planned change can take place but in no way assures that the rhetoric will become reality if other necessary conditions are not present. The amount of the funds does not change that nor does the length of the funding period. At the same time we do not wish to minimize the importance of these aspects of the intervention model because they do provide significant contributions. They relieve the pressure of constantly being in a planning mode and diminish search behavior for outside funds. The energy consumed by these behaviors can be channeled into implementing and revising plans so as to reduce negative and unanticipated consequences. We see these elements as highly desirable in most intervention models.

An issue that plagued the district, as well as federal officials in Washington, for at least the first two years of ESP was that of ambiguity about comprehensive change. At least some of the confusion can be traced to the vagueness of the charge from USOE and NIE. It was not something peculiar to the ESP model; the problem is at least as old as planned change itself. However, in this instance the vagueness of the charge was somewhat intentional because specific change in the school district was to emanate from the grass roots. Nevertheless, it was the subject of many conversations and the issue was never really resolved. Apparently few problems surfaced during the initial and negotiation stages that were not quickly resolved. The broad aimed guidelines probably created more problems during the implementational stage and in the discussions prior to refunding. Since the program design at the local level was also not very precise, few parameters existed for informed decision making and conflict resolution. Consequently, we are recommending that another important step be added. Specific strategies for

implementing the grand program design at the LEA level should be spelled out in as much detail as possible before funds are granted--but only after the problems to be solved have been conceptualized and ends agreed upon by both district and federal actors. It seems logical to be concerned with means (solutions) following the previous step but before actual implementational events begin. After all, most of the disagreement within the local district and between the local district and the funding agency occurs over means and not ends. It is the means by which new programs are operationalized that create new relationships and change the roles and statuses of individuals. The major source of resistance to change is the risk that implementers must take in assuming new roles. This is the true innovation and not the new materials that are introduced. They are merely the tools of innovation. Some change theorists and practitioners argue that the change rhetoric in proposals should serve only to gain social, psychological, and financial support and once that is achieved, it has served its purpose. They hold that a great amount of "wiggle room" must remain for the potential reformers and implementers to work out the details. We, too, are firm believers in the notion that action informs thinking and therefore plans must be subject to change. At the same time, we are advocates of the notion that plans which deal primarily with ends is insufficient because they have not grappled with those issues which are the main source of conflict. All too often solutions (strategies for implementation) are laid on implementers even without agreement that they remotely relate to the problem that is to be solved, and without any understanding of what is implied in changed relationships. In essence, we are advocating steps which suggest that more resources in terms of time and expertise be devoted to the initial and negotiation stages. At the same time, only those potential clients would be involved in the solution steps who had communicated a sense of the problem, had agreed internally upon ends, had been judged by the funding agency to have a conceptual plan which merits further consideration and had been judged, on the basis of systematically generated information, by the funding agency to possess a favorable climate for change as well as the inclination and capability to implement such a program. The adoption of such a model should decrease the number of projects which meet an early demise or which undergo massive and undesirable transformation. Presently the only means of dealing with such developments is to withdraw funds, and this is not a viable alternative because of its political infeasibility. We would like to speculate further by suggesting that adding the step in the model that deals with gathering systematic information on capability and inclination to change, as well as the step on strategies for implementing the program (solution step) would have revealed that comprehensive and systemic change was not possible, or for that matter desirable, in the Jefferson district. Elaboration of this point is reserved for the discussion on local constraints.

Another issue which was never resolved during the J ESP was the role of the federal agency. The data that have been presented in this report make it quite clear that the local clients were unsure what was expected of them in carrying out a comprehensive, systemic mandate for change. The signals from Washington did appear to be mixed. The stance of minimal intervention on the part of federal officials came through clearly on the level of general intent. Although federal officials did not tell the district what specific changes to make, it was made

abundantly clear from time to time that what the district proposed to do could not be done. What outwardly appeared to be freedom to implement as district personnel elected was oftentimes erroneous and more than a little frustrating. The absence of previously agreed upon clear and precise parameters that informed decisions precluded both sets of actors from pursuing more productive behaviors and which would probably have been more palatable to them. Conflict between Washington and the LEA was much less pronounced during the last half of the project since monitoring was almost non-existent due to scarce resources.

Sufficient time to plan and mount a program of considerable magnitude at the national level was not available to federal officials. Consequently, they could not give to others what was denied to them. Traditionally, time is not usually considered as a valuable resource like money and materials, but as a given. The truth of the matter is that time is as important as any resource--maybe more so. It is not sufficient to insure success, but the chances for success should be enhanced considerably if it were treated as a finite resource. An ironic development in all of this is that in one respect time was thought to be an important factor to consider as a part of the change model. The contract covered several years--not one or two years as was the case traditionally. Consequently, time and energy could be devoted to more productive endeavors than writing proposals for contract renewal or for new contracts. It would serve no purpose in trying to show culpability for failing to view time as a resource (or any other shortcoming for that matter), but what we are saying is that time is an important and scarce source and should receive due consideration.

Experimental Schools was a program which seemingly called for a large and expanding staff at the federal level. It involved millions of dollars and eventually 25 sites. Such was not the case; the staff was small even when the program realized its full size. There was insufficient time to monitor existing programs because staff time was taken up with expansion problems. A related problem was inadequate funds for staff travel. A small staff plus minimal funds for staff travel proved to be a major constraint on the capability of the federal agency to monitor the ESP and to provide needed assistance to people in the field. This doesn't appear to be a complicated problem, but it has plagued federally funded educational programs for a long time.

Another constraining factor was the almost constant turnover of the central staff in Washington. It was certainly a problem for the staff there to deal with, but it was even more of a problem at the local level. Stable relationships with people in the field are a must if good rapport is to be developed and maintained. It was stated earlier that the aspect of change which encounters the most resistance is the establishment of new roles and relationships, and it is no less true at this level. Stability not change is in order; a certain amount of stability in human relationships must exist if people are to take risks, and changing certainly involves taking risks. Staff turnover is probably related to all of the factors we are discussing here, but it is closely related to inadequate staffing and constantly changing priorities, the final factor discussed under constraints at the federal level.

Few, if any, federal educational programs enjoy high status throughout the life of the program and consequently, priorities may change at any moment with a sudden shift in personnel. The shift usually creates a new set of priorities which are imposed in LEA's. Confusion, sometimes bordering on chaos, is the result. It was difficult to keep abreast on what the priorities were in Experimental Schools. Changes at USOE and NIE policy levels, changes at the agency level and differing expectations of the numerous panels of experts that descended on both the local project and the external evaluation team created undue anxiety and interfered with continuity. Presently there is a nagging realization among this evaluation staff that there may not be anyone left at NIE interested in the results of J ESP. Ostensibly the purpose of ESP was to test the viability of a change model. We are not advocating the adoption of the ESP model as applied in J ESP for future programs, but we have attempted to highlight its strengths and weaknesses. We have shown what happened in one case. There are both positive and negative aspects to J ESP; theoretically something can be learned from both. A cross-site comparison of results might very well reveal that what has been pictured as a negative feature of the model here was a positive feature in another site. For example, we suggested that under certain social conditions and with an addition of two steps in the initiating and negotiating stages, entirely different results might have emerged. It is possible, even probable, that the case was different in another setting. We strongly recommend that the results reported here and in other ESP sites be studied for possible insights into the development of new collaborative change models. We further suggest that long range planning might partially circumvent the demise of programs before their scheduled culmination. Some things must possess enough stability to induce continuity or else there is no meaningful point of departure. We believe that an organization which purports to promote planned change in LEA's must develop long range plans which encourage both continuity in some organizational elements and change in others. Both are possible and desirable.

As previously indicated, factors that inhibited the likelihood of a successful program of comprehensive, systemic change as envisioned in the rhetoric were not confined to the federal level. We turn to a discussion of some of the more salient constraints at the local level.

B. Constraints at the Local Level

Major factors which militated against successful planned change at the local level included the infeasibility and undesirability of comprehensive, systemic change in Jefferson, the vagueness and incompleteness of the proposal rhetoric, the lack of a sensed substantive problem and consequently, a broad impetus to change, a lack of incentive to change, and severely limited time in which to involve potential implementers.

Comprehensive, systemic change in school districts is a debatable concept. Organizations seek a state of equilibrium in order to sustain themselves, indeed a legitimate goal, and broad, sweeping change in the system militates against the achievement of a steady state. Schools can tolerate only so much change and still attend to the business of "keeping" school, and planned change programs must be sensitive to this need. Even when specific but broad changes are determined at the local level, there are limits to what can be changed and how quickly change can occur. If dissatisfaction does exist with an ongoing system it is highly unlikely that dissatisfaction pervades institutional level management, middle level management, involvement of community people in the schools, staffing arrangements, power and authority arrangements, instructional procedures, curricula, the outcomes of schooling, the manner in which assessment occurs and the flow of information to inform decisions. People are reluctant to change those things with which they are satisfied even if new roles, relationships and statuses are not threatening to them. Where there is little impetus to change, there is little incentive to change. Minimal impetus to change exists when the significant local actors are satisfied with what is. We believe this to be generally true and we are further persuaded of the truth of it in the Jefferson School District. There was little sense of a felt substantive problem in Jefferson. A problem of adequate financial resources to sustain existing educational programs was evident but not a problem with the various programs, including the manner in which decisions were made. Of course, there were a few people in Jefferson who were not pleased with the status quo but no widespread dissatisfaction--not from the central office staff, not from the principals, not from the teachers, not from the students and not from the community population. In the main, existing policies, practices and procedures were broadly accepted. A climate conducive to sweeping change was not present. A careful and systematic study of social conditions existing in Jefferson prior to a final funding (a step we advocated adding to future change models) would have revealed that a climate which facilitates massive change did not exist. Much of what we have reported about social conditions in Jefferson could have been uncovered at an early point. This statement is not intended to be a condemnation of either federal planners or the Jefferson district but is raised here to show the utility of such a step. Information resulting from such a survey can be useful in determining what change is feasible and desirable to attempt. The gist of the charge to district personnel was that they must invoke change in certain elements but could specify what that change was to be within those elements. We strongly endorse the idea that change should be specified by those doing the implementing, but further believe that the change should include an identification of what aspect(s) of schooling are to be targeted for change as well as what that specific change will be.

The proposal language was also vague and ends oriented and consequently, served mostly a ceremonial function gaining social, psychological and financial support for the project. A grand strategy for implementing the program design was not a part of the proposal nor did it develop later. Minimal time existed to solicit involvement of those destined to implement the project design. Little change emerged that could be labeled either comprehensive or systemic. Conditions at both the federal and local levels had combined to render such a development unlikely.

Yet change did occur in the Jefferson School District during ESP as we have reported in this and related documents. Although ESP has not succeeded in reforming Jefferson as visualized--comprehensively and systemically, it did change much more than it would have normally changed without ESP. Just because numerous groups had resisted wholesale change does not mean that there were not some people who wanted to try some new ways of doing things. ESP monies made it possible to try new materials and techniques that otherwise would not have been possible. Although the model for change proved only minimally successful in accomplishing projected change, ESP was good for Jefferson. It served as a lubricant for social and bureaucratic forces. There is an intrinsic quality about attempts to change. As has been previously explicated, change occurred school by school and teacher by teacher. When district people were ready for change and capable of changing, they tried new programs. There was no systemwide strategy designed or adopted; minimal coordination occurred between schools and even within schools in many instances. It might be said that what occurred was analogous to shopping in a supermarket. School personnel took what they wanted and did what they wanted with what they took. It tended to be a nightmare for evaluators (both internal and external evaluators). It was much less difficult to document what occurred than it was to evaluate the impact of various innovations. It is ironic that J ESP succeeded in promoting piecemeal change--the very thing that previous collaborative arrangements between federal agencies and LEA's had accomplished and which had been cited in early ESP rhetoric as a major cause for limited impact.

Is there an alternative to the ESP model for change? We believe we have explicated an alternative that can serve as a starting point for a new model. ESP cross-site information can also be used to supplement what has been learned here as well as other collaborative ventures that involve federal and private funding agencies and local school districts.

Several years ago Smith and Keith suggested that gradualism was a viable alternative to grand and sweeping change and we concur with their thinking. Incremental change is possible in most school districts while grandiose change is not. If change is successful in smaller settings, it will touch people both inside and outside the district. It is unlikely that sufficient impetus can be mustered to change an entire system--whereas a sub-setting may be changed, even several elements within that sub-setting, provided a felt problem exists. It is less complex to get agreement on the functional problem, desired ends, and the means by which a solution can be reached if fewer people are involved and their frames of reference are not too dissimilar. If the solution calls for greater interdependence, coordination comes easier with a few people than with a lot of people. Just because planned change occurs in a small setting or on a small scale doesn't mean that it has to be "piecemeal." We also agree with the designers of ESP that "piecemeal" change is not desirable when planned change occurs that has not been thought through and planned carefully and systematically. Also many changes have been judged unsuccessful that did not really occur but were assumed to have occurred. The emphasis on comprehensiveness could be changed from extensiveness to intensiveness. For example, comprehensive change could occur in a reading program for first grade

youngsters in a single classroom if multiple aspects of the program to teach reading were altered simultaneously.

We would also emphasize the point that if meaningful and effective reform is to occur in promoting educational reform at the local level, a broader social and political context than the LEA's and funding agencies must be considered. Constraints to reform outside these two settings is not within the purview of this report; however, to attempt the development of a new collaborative change model without including such variables is to invite major problems and hindrances.

C. Summary

Numerous constraints existed at both the federal and local levels that inhibited an effective implementation of the planned program of reform in Jefferson. Still it has been suggested that J ESP has been functional for the Jefferson School District. It helped the district through a severe financial crunch and permitted individual schools and individual teachers to try some programs which were being tried elsewhere--as well as develop new curricula. The ESP did not have a deleterious effect upon student outcomes in general, nor did it have an overall positive effect, at least as measured by both internal and external evaluators. The ESP did have intrinsic value for Jefferson in that it served as a lubricant for social and bureaucratic forces. By and large, it can be said that Jefferson gained from the experience.

Did J ESP serve its stated function as expressed in the grand design? We have concluded that generally it did not. Broad and sweeping change did not occur as envisioned in the rhetoric. We have argued that it was neither feasible or desirable in this setting.

Was the overall ESP model for inducing planned reform successful in Jefferson? We submit that generally it was not successful and have tried to provide empirical support for our case by documenting what did and did not happen. We have also advanced some possible explanations as to why. It was held that the ESP model as conceived and articulated was not really tested in Jefferson. We have argued that some aspects of the model were not congruent with the reality of change and suggested a gradual and incremental approach but with a different interpretation of comprehensiveness. Finally, we advocated that new collaborative change models should be concerned with conditions which might be manipulated that lie outside the LEA's and federal funding agencies.

Was the J ESP of any value other than to the district itself? Is what has been learned from this experience of any help in developing subsequent collaborative change models? Has anything new been learned about planned change? We would respond to those questions in the affirmative. But, of course, we may be somewhat biased. The readers of this document are in a position to provide an informed response to these and other questions.

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APPENDICES

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APPENDIX A
METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

Methodological Issues

Appendix A is an extension of what was introduced as a Methodological Note in the introduction section. In this extension we discuss a multi-level approach to evaluation as envisioned by the architects of the Experimental Schools Program; some salient functional issues of immediate concern in the evaluation of J ESP; our response to the substantive evaluation issues confronting Level II in launching the evaluation effort; the employment of a qualitative evaluation strategy to address certain types of questions; the use of a quantitative evaluation strategy to address certain types of questions; a combination of these strategies; and finally, a few comments on the illuminative evaluation design.

The Multi-level Approach to Evaluation

The architects of ESP felt that evaluation should be no less comprehensive than the proposed program change and should serve as an analytical counterpart to that program. This view of evaluation suggested that it needed to serve a broader function than to simply assess program impact on targeted clientele with the assumption that events were occurring as planned. Evaluation was to provide constant process and product feedback about the program that had the potential of contributing to informed decision making at the local level. An internal evaluation unit was to be developed (if the capacity did not already exist) to provide these data to local decision makers. The unit was to be an integral part of the local change program and responsible to the school district. The role and function which the Level I evaluation unit performed in the J ESP is presented in Chapter VII of this report.

Evaluation was to provide information related to the problems encountered in implementing innovations. Information was to be generated on many aspects of the change effort, thereby yielding some insight into problems associated with planned change. Impact data on targeted clientele were to be gathered, analyzed and interpreted. These general charges were to be carried out by an on-site, external evaluation team (Level II). The contract for the external evaluation of the J ESP was awarded to the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. In the summer of 1971 an evaluation team was placed in the district. An independent unit, the team reported directly to the funding agency through NWREL--not to the district. Since the external evaluation unit was not to influence the project, most Level II reports have not been shared with the district heretofore. *

*There were a few exceptions since it was deemed necessary to legitimize our presence and establish credibility with the local school people. The few reports that were shared with the district were judged jointly with the federal client not to be in violation of the non-interference posture of Level II. Most of them will now be shared since the project is ended.

The funding agency wanted to gain an unbiased view of J ESP, hence the second level of evaluation. Evaluation information critical to district decision makers was to be fed back through Level I while information critical to the intervening agency was to be gathered independently and fed directly to them.

A third source of information for the intervening agency was to emanate from cross-site comparisons of common programs, problems and issues. These data were to be gathered by a Level III evaluation unit which was to be housed in the offices of the federal agency. This evaluation unit never materialized although several efforts were made to launch such. It seems to us that the ESP program could have been well served with such a capacity. The reasons that position is held have already been discussed in Chapter IX.

Immediate Functional Concerns

Level I and Level II teams were on site in the summer of 1971, but after a year no agreement had been reached as to how the separate evaluation units would function cooperatively in a single setting. A plan for Level I had been approved in the first thirty months district proposal, but the details of how the two teams would gather and share common data were to be worked out jointly and approved by USOE. The one thing that did appear to be clear was that although the two evaluation teams were to be independent of each other in determining the questions to be addressed, they were not to barrage the district with data demands when common data could be utilized.

No agreement had been reached between USOE and Level II evaluation as to what it should be about, although the team had been on site for approximately a year. All of the blame for the absence of such a plan did not rest solely with Level II. The charge for Level II evaluation was vague and consequently much latitude for varying interpretations existed as to what was expected. A new director assumed responsibility for the Level II evaluation program in July of 1972 and two new team members were added by the end of October. Although no approved evaluation plan existed, it was obvious that student achievement and attitude data would be needed. An arrangement on gathering and sharing these data was worked out with the Level I director. A previous agreement existed that data from field notes would not be shared. Their initial budget had been predicated on the idea that Level II would underwrite their share of data gathering and preliminary analysis. With the reaching of an agreement, it was now feasible for Level I to proceed with their approved plan, and Level II could concentrate on developing an evaluation plan.

We perceived our task to be two-fold. Our first priority was to come up with a conceptualization of the evaluation problem that confronted us before providing a detailed operational plan. Following a conceptualization of the task would be the development of an operational plan including a work statement. We also believed that the plan must be developmental. The two staff members who had been in the district the first year of the project were quite knowledgeable about the state of the ESP. Their insights, coupled with what all of us knew about reform efforts in

general, led us to believe that whatever plan we developed must be subject to change depending on the information the team came up with on events that were actually occurring in the Jefferson District. We had the concurrence of our Project Officer, but while in the throes of writing a developmental plan, it was learned that NIE was sending a panel to Jefferson to evaluate the evaluation. The saga of that experience will not be detailed here, and is mentioned only because it was a major functional issue with which we had to grapple. It presented a particularly difficult situation for us because we now had eight different agenda with which to deal; our agenda, NIE's agenda, and the agenda of the six different panel members. It was impossible to determine who wanted us to do what. Anyway we survived the experience and lived to see an overall evaluation design eventually approved by NIE. Although evaluation project officers changed many times in the next three and one-half years, the approach to evaluation in the J ESP did not change radically. Only the quality of our studies improved with the addition of Level II staff and the flexibility and excellent technical assistance offered by project staff in Washington.

These were certainly not all of the functional problems that were encountered during those first few months, but the treatment of a few of the more salient ones should provide a flavor of the climate we faced during those first several months. The next section deals with the substance of developing an evaluation methodology consonant with the program we were charged with documenting and evaluating.

Substantive Evaluation Issues

Through studying the Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Level II evaluation and also through conversations with the federal director of evaluation for ESP, it was learned that there were three major considerations. First, the impact of the ESP intervention on district clients was to be assessed. Second, Level II evaluation was to document what happened as the Jefferson Schools implemented the project. Third, the planners of ESP wanted a broad evaluation design that encompassed more than existing evaluation models. It was the responsibility of Level II evaluators to provide the specifics. We interpreted the general charge to mean that answers should be sought to two basic questions: How did the J ESP work? How will the J ESP work? Added to the general charge from Washington were two other basic questions: Why does the J ESP take certain forms? How do a government agency and a local education agency work together to bring about planned change?

We did not believe that very many resources should be expended in pursuing the impact question without first illuminating the events that were actually occurring in the Jefferson District. This posture elevated the importance of implementation variables by suggesting that they should be subject to empirical investigation. At the same time, the importance of studying outcome variables was not minimized. Adding the why question had the potential of helping to explain why planned change occurs or fails to occur. We also believed that the role of the intervening agency added another important dimension in understanding what happened

and why it happened. The genesis, contact, planning, negotiating and monitoring stages at all levels are integral parts of the project and must be understood before a complete portrayal can be projected. In essence, what we proposed to do, and actually did, was to provide an indepth case study of an entire school district utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methods of gathering and analyzing data.

Since the project was to affect several elements of the school system such as governance, community, curriculum and instruction, staffing, training, and assessment, it seemed to make sense to develop specific studies that were focussed on these elements of the system--studies that captured both process and product. Additionally, we attempted to record, analyze and interpret interactions between the Jefferson LEA and the intervening agency. Some forty studies were conducted during the four years this particular team was on site. The final report also includes some data that were not included in individual interim reports. To effectively address the several questions, it was necessary to conduct both qualitative and quantitative studies. Consequently, the research and evaluation team was staffed with interdisciplinary scholars with diverse backgrounds and training. Specific designs were developed for each study and are included in each interim report. However, an attempt is made here to provide some general comments on how certain questions were addressed.

Qualitative Strategies

Documentation was interpreted to mean that events, interactions and activities should be recorded and analyzed. For the most part, the what happened question as well as the why question was pursued qualitatively. Those data are mostly in the form of field notes taken while visiting classrooms, attending meetings, conducting interviews and looking through documents. Some of the data from field notes yielded quite well to quantitative analyses as in the case of studies in curriculum and instruction, community and governance. It was felt that outcome studies would not be particularly meaningful unless treatments were identified and described, although it was necessary to conduct some quantitative studies without benefit of empirical analyses of process or implementation variables. Much qualitative data were gathered, analyzed, interpreted and reported in the governance component of the study, the community component, the curriculum and instruction component, and the assessment component. In some cases, these data could not be tied to quantitative outcome data and in other cases they could be. This does not mean, however, that impact was not reported in all cases because it is possible to use qualitative data to assess impact. In some instances these evaluators were trained educational ethnographers and in all cases they had some training in field methodology.

As an example of what is being referred to here, a study from the curriculum and instructional component is cited. The team wanted to get some purchase on the variety and extent of use of curricular programs and instructional practices. The purpose of the study was two-fold: (1) to get some notion of what the district was implementing and (2) to later be able to study outcome variables of students in relation to treatments. Classrooms on all levels were sampled by actually sitting

in those classrooms and recording information on the use of curricular programs and materials, instructional practices, teacher and student interactions and activities and a host of other variables. This study also served as a valuable information source in later tying students to program treatments.

Our evaluation team found, in the main, that observation was most effective in gathering information on what was actually occurring in the project, and it didn't seem to matter whether it was curriculum, instruction, community, governance or evaluation. The why question was most effectively addressed through follow-up interviews with significant actors or through formally structured interviews. The impact or how well question was most effectively addressed with quantitative data, but only after we were able to identify the event, activity or interaction that would cause or in some way be related to the outcome. The largest single drawback to the use of the qualitative method, especially observation, is that it is expensive to implement. At the same time, it is cost effective when the richness of the acquired data is considered.

Quantitative Strategies

Quantitative data were used primarily in six ways: (1) to assess the impact of the overall ESP intervention on student achievement without illuminating implementational variables, (2) to assess the impact of specific ESP programs on student achievement but illuminating implementational variables with qualitative data (sometimes transformed to quantitative data), (3) to assess the impact of specific ESP programs on student achievement while illuminating implementational and other independent and control variables with quantitative data, but informed by qualitative data that had been gathered earlier in the project, (4) to assess attitudes, opinions and sentiments of parents with students in Jefferson schools regarding ESP thrusts and programs, (5) to assess the institutional character of the Jefferson staff before and during the project using perception data, and (6) to trace the expenditure of ESP funds during the project and non-ESP funds before and during the project.

For the most part, we found that quantitative data were more amenable to answering questions of impact than qualitative data; it was certainly more efficient. However, in considering the question of impact, it should be reiterated that the results were often difficult to interpret when not associated with process variables on which some form of empirical analysis had been done. Interpretation often took the form of speculation with the advancement of alternative explanations—not uncommon when using traditional models of evaluation.

Combining Strategies

The strength of our evaluation design resides in the fact that several data-gathering and analysis techniques were utilized. We did not pick up on the polemic between the advocates of field methods and the proponents of survey techniques. We made the assumption that data-gathering techniques cannot be divorced from the nature of the problem. The problem under investigation

must dictate the method or methods of investigation; no one best method exists that can be effectively utilized in all situations. Fieldwork contributes to survey analyses and vice-versa. We found that a combination of these strategies often enhances interpretation of results. We also found that the utilization of one method often facilitates the use of another. But just as important, we also found that combining techniques is sometimes the best solution. This was done in community studies, curriculum and instructional studies and student impact studies. The specific designs of these studies can be found in interim reports mentioned in this report and listed in the ERIC system.

The Illuminative Evaluation Model

This was a case study of a single educational system, the Jefferson School District, utilizing both field and survey methods. Much has been made of the usefulness of illuminating both process and product variables; of elevating implementational variables and subjecting them to empirical analysis; of the utility in appraising events rather than non-events; of the richness of observation and other field-generated data; and of the usefulness of combining evaluation methodologies. To our knowledge, this is the first time that all of these have been successfully accomplished in the same investigation. The utility of this model in studying planned innovation is readily apparent. Events cannot be assumed nor is it sufficient to speculate about alternative explanations of what the data might be suggesting if innovations are to be understood and decisions are to be made on the basis of evaluation information. It is wasteful of resources to judge reform programs as successes or failures on the basis of severely limited information. This is not the first time that scholars have called for greater illumination; however, it may very well represent the first attempt to actually illuminate a program of planned reform. We recognize that this evaluation effort was replete with problems and that we also made mistakes which we would not make again. It does, however, represent a good beginning in utilizing a more inclusive evaluation model.

One final point should be made. Most evaluation projects are not funded at a level approaching this one. But on the other hand, that could be at least a partial explanation of why evaluation historically has enjoyed minimal success in helping us to understand and find solutions to the myriad problems associated with planned change.

APPENDIX B

LIST OF LEVEL II INTERIM REPORTS

List of Level II Interim Reports

Community Component

Mulhauser, F., "Charrette Report," September 8, 1972.

- * Eixenberger, D. F., "Community Profile of the Jefferson School District," July 13, 1973.

Eixenberger, D. F., Hawley, B., and B. Fite, "Survey of the Parents of the Jefferson School District," November 1973.

- * Eixenberger, D. F., Hawley, B., and B. Fite, "Impact of the Experimental Schools Project on Parents of the Jefferson School District," April 1974.
- * Eixenberger, D. F., "Formal Community Involvement in Policy Formation at the Board of Education and the Education Council Since the Development of the Jefferson Experimental Schools Project," July 1974.
- * Eixenberger, D. F. and J. Crist-Whitzel, "Parents and the Schools: An Examination of Consensus, Perceptions of Quality, and Involvement," January 1976.
- * Eixenberger, D. F., "Report on Formal Relationships Between School and Community at the Building Level," March 1976.
- * Eixenberger, D. F., "Community Participation in the Jefferson Experimental Schools Project," April 1976.

Governance Component

- * Mulhauser, F., "Report to Mr. J. Schiller," May 9, 1973.
- Pierce, D., "Jefferson Education Association-Jefferson School District Relationships," March 1974.
- Pierce, D., "The Fiscal Environment of the Jefferson Experimental Schools Project School Finance Structure," March 1974.
- * Mulhauser, F., (with editorial revision by D. Pierce and W. Doyle), "School-University Relations in the Jefferson Experimental Schools Project: A Two-Year Review," working paper, March 1974.
- * Pierce, D., "Project Governance: A Three-Year Review," August 1974.

- *Pierce, D., "Perceptions of Institutional Character, " December 31, 1974.
- *Pierce, D., "Jefferson Educational Association-Jefferson School District Relationships: Impacts of the Teachers' Association Upon Governance," June 1975.
- *Pierce, D., "Project Governance: A Fourth Year Review," September 1975.
- *Pierce, D., "Project Governance: A Five-Year Review," April 1976.
- *Donicht, F., "Jefferson Experimental Schools Project: A Fiscal Orientation," May 1976.

Instructional Environment Component

- Everhart, R. B., "Schooling and the Socialization of Knowledge," working paper, August 1973.
- Everhart, R. B., Hawley, B., McGeever, J. M., and R. M. Toepper, "A Survey of Selected Educational Practices in Seven Schools Before their Official Involvement in the Jefferson Experimental Schools Project," May 1974.
- *Everhart, R. B., Hawley, B., McGeever, J. M. and R. M. Toepper, "Curriculum and Instruction in the Mathematics, Communications, and Social Studies Streams in the Jefferson Experimental Schools Project," September 1974.
- *Toepper, R. M., "A Study of Curricular Decision Making in the Jefferson School District Experimental Schools Project," December 1975.
- *Everhart, R. B. and J. M. McGeever, "Career and Personal Development Streams in the Jefferson School District," January 1976.
- McGeever, J. M., "The Instructional Experience of Selected Students in Traditional and Innovative Instructional Settings," January 1976.
- *Toepper, R. M. and J. M. McGeever, "The Status of Individualized Instructional Strategies on the Elementary Level (K-6) in the Jefferson School District During Its Five-Year Experimental Schools Project," April 1976.
- Everhart, R. B., "The Worlds of the School: Everyday Life in a Junior High School," July 1976.

Student Impact Component

- Reynolds, L., "Report on Student Transiency in Lincoln High School," May 30, 1973.

- Reynolds, L., "Descriptive Survey of Twelfth Graders in the Lincoln and Jefferson High Schools," June 30, 1973.
- * Reynolds, L. and T. Donicht, "Monitoring Report I: Changes in Student Achievement in Jefferson During the First Two Years of the Experimental Schools Project," October 1973.
- Donicht, T. L., "A Review of Literature Concerning the Educational Effects of Student Residential Mobility," January 9, 1974.
- Donicht, T. L., "Monitoring Report II: Analysis of Elementary Student Achievement Patterns in Jefferson, 1967-1973," March 1974.
- Donicht, T. L. and L. Reynolds, "Monitoring Report III: Changes in Elementary Student Achievement," April 1974.
- Donicht, T. L. and L. Reynolds, "The Effect of Transiency and Social Integration Upon the Academic Achievement," May 1974.
- Donicht, T. L., "Monitoring Report IV: Changes in Junior High Student Achievement in Jefferson," January 15, 1975.
- Donicht, T. L., "Monitoring Report V: Changes in Senior High Student Achievement in Jefferson," March 1975.
- * Crist-Whitzel, J. and B. Hawley-Winne, "A Study of Student Characteristics, Instructional Outcomes and Classroom Environment in Different Instructional Approaches in Sixth Grade Mathematics and Reading," December 1975.
- * Donicht, T. L., "Summary Report: Changes in Jefferson Student Achievement, 1971-1975," May 1976.
- * Crist-Whitzel, J., Toepper, R. M., Donicht, T. L. and J. M. McGeever, "A Longitudinal Study of Achievement in Franklin Pierce Mathematics and Communications Instructional Treatments," October 1976.

Other

- * Eixenberger, D. F., "Internal Evaluation: A Sea of Heterogeneity," May 1976.

* Referred to in this report.

APPENDIX C

OBJECTIVES OF THE FIRST 30 MONTHS OF THE JEFFERSON ESP

The final draft of the original ESP proposal: "Experimental Schools, Jefferson: Providing Optimum Learning Environments for 4000 Students," an application to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare for an operations grant under provisions of the Experimental Schools Program, planning project OEG-0-71-1214, project number 18040, submitted by the superintendent, May 15, 1971, pp. 5, 8 and 10.

**RELATIONSHIP OF IDENTIFIED EDUCATIONAL NEEDS
TO PROPOSED PROJECT OBJECTIVES**

NEEDS

**ALL students need to experience
SUCCESS**

Students need to be active participants in the learning process

**Students need to develop REAL
RESPONSIBILITY**

**Students need to develop a POSITIVE
SELF IMAGE**

**Students need relevant curriculums
with content built around student
interests.**

**Students need to be prepared for
the FUTURE**

OBJECTIVES

1. Decrease by 75% the number of students behind grade level.
 2. Maintain rate of progress for students at grade level.
 3. Decrease by 25% time required by gifted students to complete academic assignments.
 4. Offer each student some course in which he can be successful.
-
1. All students in one or more classes of less than 15 students daily.
 2. High priority to individualized and independent study programs.
-
1. Vocational work experience provided for all students K-12.
 2. Graduation requirements include at least one-semester of work experience and certify that the student could accept responsibility from sources external to the school.
-
1. Programs designed for competition with SELF rather than with PEERS.
 2. Opportunities, when needed, for one-to-one pupil-teacher groupings.
-
1. New FIFTH day interim and summer month curriculums built on student interests.
 2. Technical-Interdisciplinary curriculums relating INTEREST to academic subjects.
-
1. Students will participate in experiences preparing them for shorter HIGH PERFORMANCE work weeks and be able to constructively use leisure time. Learn relevant THINKING SKILLS.

NEEDS

Today's students need IDEALISM

Teachers and all instructional personnel NEED training to work at a higher performance level

School buildings NEED to be utilized during the entire year

Schools NEED to utilize staff members more efficiently

The COMMUNITY NEEDS to be involved in school operations

Individualized and group oriented curriculum NEEDS to be efficiently managed

OBJECTIVES

1. School allows activities WITHIN school rather than WITHOUT.
2. Students will demonstrate a realistic approach to non-materialistic values.

1. All teachers in ungraded programs will be trained to work adequately with pupils grouped in flexible, continuous progress curriculums.
2. Teachers will demonstrate improved educator-learning relationships.
3. Teachers will be able to accept the concept of differentiated assignment based on variable performance of students.

To increase the availability of schools to students by at least 33% by keeping them open in the evenings and programming their use during the summer months.

Using a formula acceptable to the teachers association and parents, increase the adult-pupil ratio to 1:12 without significantly increasing the costs. Develop adequate job descriptions and conduct training for these added personnel.

Establish the CHARRETTE as a regular procedure for converting community desires into real programs. Utilize and train selected members of the community for volunteer service in the schools.

The amount of time a student spends in school will be determined by his performance level. The school will move from an emphasis of providing 180 days of "custody" to emphasizing a change in the level of "performance."

NEEDS

The INSTITUTION NEEDS schools which the patrons can afford

There NEEDS to be a training program for each of the project components so that successful practices can be exported

The Project NEEDS to be accounted in the PPBES format

A system NEEDS to be developed to determine which project components should be exported and which promising programs should be imported

OBJECTIVES

A cost-effectiveness formula will be applied to PRESENT as well as new curriculums utilizing the following formula:

$$\frac{\text{TOTAL COST X QUALITY RATIO}}{\text{INSTRUCTIONAL COST}} = \text{C. E. (Coefficient)}$$

Those programs which can be justified either from increased QUALITY or decreased instructor's cost will be retained. Others will be modified or discontinued.

Two local universities will establish training in three dimensions:

1. Incorporate information about project components in their regular training programs.
2. Develop training for INSTALLERS including workshops, visitation, and material development so that project components can be successfully exported.
3. Conduct mini-courses and clinics on project components.

To cost account all programs in terms of performance objectives:

1. For the federal budget for the 1971-72 school year.
2. For the TOTAL school budget of the project of the project schools for the 1972-73 school year.

To develop a quality and efficiency import, export model and apply this instrument to all components to be imported for the 1971-72 school year and develop the criteria for all components ready to be exported by 1973-74.

NEEDS

The project NEEDS to be able to handle visitors to the project schools without these visitors becoming part of the educational process.

Evaluation results NEED to be used to continue, discontinue or modify project components.

OBJECTIVES

A television dissemination center will be established at a local university to bring live signals from eight locations in the three proximity schools. These would be distributed through the existing T. V. networks. Visitors would have an orientation at the university, view selected classes in action, and visit one or two sites instead of all six.

After the first year, projects showing negative evaluation values will be modified. After the second year, the negative value projects will be discontinued.